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Wayside Pansies.

By

Edward Freiberger.

WAYSIDE PANSIES

BY

EDWARD FREIBERGER

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FOR

Florine

These Pansies

ARE

GATHERED.

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Flora's Favors.

OCT. 17, 1888.

I would that I ruled Flora, queen of flowers,
To bid her lay her kingdom at thy feet,
To bring thee bliss, to give thee gladness sweet,
To lead thy way through beauty-laden bowers.

Not only pansies then would bright thy hours,
But violets, too, from many a fair retreat
Where modesty and thought in concord meet,
To rain their sentiments in gentle showers.

The lilies pure would ever seek thy face
To gain thy beauty's favor, and to prove
Their lives and thine a wondrous garden plot
Of living joy, the halo of thy grace.
I'd crown thee last with roses, rich in love,
Then humbly pray to thee: "Forget-me-not."

"Elaine."

TO ANNIE RUSSELL.

A view at early morn: The vast expanse
Of firmament is burdened with a mass
Of nimbus clouds, so dense they drape the earth
As with a pall, so dark all hope of light
Seems dead. The sorrowed world in silence mourns
Its loss. But suddenly behold a small
And humble ray, the sun's sure messenger
That rends the gloom, then quickly grows in strength,
And, battling with the clouds, dispels them soon,
Thus shedding on the earth the glorious boon
Of joy-bequeathing day; so in that world
Where life and poesy make consonance,
When clouds of unbelief in human kind
Eclipse the precious faith of heavenly grace,—
The past a dream of longings unfulfilled,
The present void of every bliss, bereft
Of earthly good and peace; the future dread
An idle fantasy, in hope a blank—

A welcome gleam of hope the darkness breaks,
And, tender, waxes strong until the world
Finds rescue in the worth of woman's love.
This gleam of love is but a poet's thought,
So simple, pure, yet strong, a magic warmth
It gives unto the soul as does the sun
Unto the budding summer flowers. Thus clear
From depths of thought, from dreamy realms of love
Doth rise the offspring of the poet's mind,
A being pure as whitest clouds that light
The highest mountain peaks and shame the snow
Upon the vale beneath; so joyous, fair,
That ecstacy it gives to gentleness:
So full of virgin love that Eros lays
His arrows at this fancy's shrine and pays
Such homage true as to an angel would
A child.

Thus England's noble laureate,
His soul impregnant with exalted thought
Of woman's simple glory, noble faith
And love, as oft inspired chivalry
In storied days of old, in joy gave birth
To an ideal, tender, true and fair,
So unpretentious yet all-powerful.
It lives and pines and loves. It has its hopes

And sufferings and then in death lives on,
Its unrequited love the threnody
That moans of death, of death the goal of love :
" Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat."
As sunbeams to the rose, Elaine to love :
A holy emblem of the sacredness
Of woman's love : a living song so sweet
More sturdy harmonies toward silence bend
And list with raptures of delight and praise :
A fancy, yet a living thing, a thought
And yet a life that gives such worth to love
It proves love's guardian angel, while the blush
Of shame hides fickle, false and skeptic souls.
All praise to him who gives thee birth, Elaine,
Whose harp brings gladness to so many souls,
Whose song tells honest hearts the worth of love,
Who gives the world thy voice, as music rare,
That far more softly " on the spirit lies
Than tired eye-lids upon tired eyes."

Elaine, oft to the musings of the soul
Thou art the dear companion, comfort, guide,—
So true and gentle, fair and lovable,
So patient, meek, ennobling, if there live
A seed of goodness in mankind thy soul
Will quicken it to life.

And man lives on,
Well blessed with memories, but oft in hope,
Some fate would make thee mortal, let thee live
As pure in life as in the spirit, thought
Or fancy that ideal worth doth give
To thee.
As mem'ry dwells on some dear friend
Or loved one true by distance banished far
From view, fond thoughts so well allied to hopes
Of quick reunion that the mind betrays
The eye, reveals the absent in the flesh,
So fancy plays a welcome trick to cheer
The senses, when upon the stage of life
Appears Elaine, the fair, the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat.
As many humble blossoms flower along
The wayside, often unobserved, unknown
To those who most should prize them, but which have
A store of sentiment and fragrance still
As pure as greater blossoms, and when bound
With greater tend to give them added worth,
So doth a humble poet,* young in years,
And grateful to the elder for his grand

---

* George Parsons Lathrop, whose dainty play of "Elaine," based on Tennyson's idyl, suggested these verses.

Ideal, lend a higher moral force,
An added charm, a greater worth to make
This pure and fair and tender fancy live
An earnest of that crown of man's estate,
A woman's love.
These are vain types: the great
Sir Lancelot, for her most high of men,
Who thinks in humbleness that in him dwells
No greatness, save it be some far-off touch
Of greatness to know well he is not great:
And Guinevere, the beautiful, who loves
Sir Lancelot, the valiant knight, all clothed
In samite robes, a queen of beauty rare,
Whose face and form might well move men from love
To passion, aye, a queen of beauty loved
And loving in an open shame: a queen
Of beauty, one whose radiant eyes of blue
Might well undo for men their better thoughts,
Aye, men as strong, as weak as Lancelot:
A queen of beauty, who, self-loving, thinks
He is all fault who hath no fault at all,
For who loves her must have a touch of earth.
There is a Llanyd, too, a wilful soul,
Who mocks at love the while she knows she loves.
And a Roselle is there who prizes more

Than knightly love the luring flash of gems.
These are but mortal loves : Thine is the dream
Of heaven : a self oblivion, not death.

Elaine, thou art a noble joy to all
Who in their wakeful dreams ideals find
To rob this earth of all its earthiness.
"A thing between an angel and a flower."
Man looks upon thy sunlit eyes and finds
A touch of heaven ; to hear thy tearful voice
Is to give ear to saddened music, strange,
Seraphic, too, for 'tis the food of love.
Thy sad and sorrowed soul doth hover near,
And in thy light is found a joy as 't were
A rainbow gladdening with its beauty fair,
And saddening that so quickly it grows faint
And pales away, though man knows well 'tis yet
The glorious symbol of a promise made
By heaven to earth. As on the sombre barge
The altar of thy love, thou liest clothed
In virgin white, adown the living stream
Borne stately, thou, in heart-touched silence, dost
A noble proof impart that in thy death
The love that woman has for man has been
So purified that childhood's prayers are not
More pure, more sacred in the eyes of God.
Elaine, thy life a boon, a sadness sweet

To all on earth, thy death a holy joy
In heaven. The richness of thy gift to man
Thou knowest well, as longing minds who seek
Ideals lofty, know their toil is not
For many ignorant, who think that they
Are wise, but for the few, who wise, confess
Their ignorance. Such souls thou hast inspired
Anew, uplifted high to noble aims
And deeds. They feel thy influence as doth
Sir Lancelot, for he becomes through thee
A holy man. Thy mission is fulfilled!
Oh! fair Elaine, in fancy and ideal,
Oh! fair Elaine, in truth and life, the two
So purely wedded in immortal soul,
The poet, thy creator, hath all love
Of those who feel and know the misty tears
Of sorrow and of joy, as rainbows tell
Alike of sunshine and of clouds.

At Beauty's Touch.

TO E. W. S.

How dear and handsome plain and simple things
are made,
When touched by hands of beauty and of art.
A simple band in beauteous form may be arrayed,
To cause the praise of mind and joy of heart,
As village brooks, though small, may great and
famous be,
When poets music catch from dimpling rill.
The great Materna gave a silken band to me,
Its beauty rare was added by your skill;
You two in life's great *opera* practice noble art,—
Both may from minstrel grateful praise command.
She gains a queenly triumph from the vocal part,
While you with equal grace—adorn the *band*.

Spring.

In winter time I drink and sing
For joy that spring is near;
I drink again when comes mild spring,
For joy that he is here.

—*From Mirza Schaffy.*

Mia Stella.

As oft a weary wanderer has strayed
Through deserts of misfortune, pain and grief,
Assailed by sands of sorrow, all belief
In human bliss by misery's tears unmade,
So wandered I, distressed, without a guide
To show the course where life and duty lay,—
Save for a feeble gleam through misty gray,—
In doubt if any feeling could abide
Within the world to make me blissful here
And give me peace and happiness above :
When shot from heaven's battlements a star.
I wished : "Oh, that I might be happy." Far,
So far away did seem the boon so dear.
Then you I met. I found new life in love.

The Mystic Voice.

"Who called Pauline?" "Who called Pauline?"
The flowers, dropped flowers, thy silent friends
That thrived and blossomed sweet and pure
And tender as thyself, Pauline.

Thy mem'ry gone, thy mind a blank,
Thy love sought that of Flora, chaste.
The blushing rose its love declared,
The pansy gave thee all its thoughts,
The violets, blue and white, made show

Of love and modesty. Then came
The periwinkle, bearing sweet
Remembrances. "Forget-me-not,"
In accents clear, but soft and low,
Was whispered, when syringa's voice

Proclaimed fond memory's return,
Thus flooding all thy soul with peace.
The flowers, fair one, had called Pauline.
They saw their beauties in thy grace
And caught new life from thy dear face.

A Birthday Greeting.

I hope, sweet friend, thou wilt be pleased to know
That in a distant land there dwelleth one
Whose thoughts reach out, on this thy natal day,
To thee, for whom another symphony
Of time is to begin ; its music rare
To be attuned to noble deeds, to thought,
To love, to kindliness, to friendship, faith.

Old Father Time the sole composer is
Whose constant music, sad or joyful, man
Perforce doth hear. The noblest orchestra
Is nature, while the life of every man
Is aye a voice to full completeness give
The master harmony divine, sublime.
Each life affects, so grandly swells the theme,
One other life, or more, and they self-hear
Their song who sing for thee. The tones of thy
Soft speaking are so pure, so sweet, so true
That they make consonance with all who sing,
Yet hear their truest echo in thy heart.

On this, the day that first thy voice was heard,
Thy parents, brothers, sisters, friends give joy
And bless thy name. They ask of Him who tunes
The vasty, clamoring sea, that thy sweet speech
May long be heard on earth to gladden hearts
And bring delight and love, content and peace ;
That in thy chosen path thy every step
May lead to victory ; that all thy life
May be a melody of health, of grace,
A harmony of perfect happiness.

To a Debutante.

If flowers of spring possess the virtue rare,
To glad the mind and deck the fair,
And fame and fortune tempt to linger near
The favored few they love to cheer,
Then these few buds will prove the symbols true,
That Hopes fulfilled will smile on you.

An Ideal Feast.

I have no need of bills of fare,
That at the banquet fill a space,
For viands rich or vintage rare
Within my thoughts can find no place,
When I am near thee, lady fair,
So full of wit, of charm, of grace :
For then I feast upon thine eyes,
And drink delights of Paradise.

After the Fete.

A ribbon blue,
Of dainty hue,
Reminds me of the pleasure,
That once I had,
When moments glad,
Gave joy to hours of leisure.

May this frail band,
That from your hand
I had as priceless treasure,
Still prove the bond,
Of friendship fond,
That time can never measure.

Inspiration.

A poet pined for happiness, some ray
Of inspiration pure, to glad his heart
That long had been oppressed and oft astray
From Faith and Hope that play so great a part

In life's strange tragedy. He asked for light
To speed the shadows from his path so sad.
He longed for some dear comrade to make bright
His mind and make his grievous senses glad.

He sang his wishes to the stars, that they
Might send him peace and joy and loving voice
To lead him where content and pleasure stay,
Where love doth dwell and make the heart rejoice.

The stars were silent, but an angel fair
Was sent to earth to bring the poet peace.
The angel was a woman pure.—His prayer
Is answered and his soul has found release.

Thou art the woman helpful, fair, the one
Whose beauty joys his heart and bids him write
Ideal thoughts and songs of praise, though none
So rich thy grace, thy glory to requite.

Thy soul-lit eyes give lustre to his life,
The sound of thy sweet voice is music rare,
Thy gentle spirit fills his thoughts, and strife
Is exiled far. To him the world is fair.

Thou art his inspiration and his star,
His guardian angel, his ideal fond,
That heard his griefs and pinings from afar
And came to bring him bliss in Love's strong bond.

Via Vitæ.

A life is like an ocean wide, the years
Are but the ships that bear us into port,
The goal, the hoped-for haven where resort
The souls who know nor pain, nor strife, nor tears.

To day you step upon a new-made craft,
That swifter still must bound above the sea,
Than that abandoned to the waves, to be
Henceforth a dream through which you wept and laughed.

Your friends sail on and sing in joy to you,
And hail you with all greetings of delight;
They hope your voyage ever may be bright
With nature's gifts, with love to glad the view.

May calm, content and peace on you attend,
And long and happy life have tranquil end.

Life's Beacons.

Men are as sailors on a darkened sea
Where winds and waves as enemies contend
To keep them from the Land of Light, the end,
Where all is peace, where souls from storms are free.

Each newer beacon 'long the wid'ning shore
Is hailed with gladness for a danger past—
And brightest hopes invite us till the last,
When Hope itself assures us hope is o'er.

You pass another beacon light to-day,
And all serene of heart lend fearless ear
To roar of rushing waves that yet give cheer,
For in their murmurings they seem to say:

What though your bark be tempest-tossed, in peace
'Twill ride the storm, till life shall find surcease.

Change.

The silver spring to golden summer turns,
To leaden winter bronzed autumn pales,
While man in blindness struggles through the night,
Until in heaven he gains the jeweled crown
That glows with gracious light of living day.

My Silver Drinking Flask.

Whenever you and I may meet again,
Midst gayest pleasures or in deepest pain,
And you should chance to ask
If absence long has held your friend still true,
I'd firmly answer "Yes," and bring to view
My silver drinking flask.

My friend so fair, I ever think of you,
And seek for words of thanks that are your due,
Though easy is the task
Imposed on Friendship fond by Memory dear.
'Tis sweet to greet the absent with the cheer
That fills my drinking flask.

Thus oft when I am lone, when I am sad,
And sorrow chills the heart that once was glad,
O'er grief I draw the mask
That knows no pain, and hides all trace of strife,
For then I live again, and bless the life
Born in my drinking flask.

More oft I feel a silent, tender joy,
That no despair, no grief can e'er destroy,
For then I humbly bask
Within the friendly sunshine of a face
That first taught me to know and prize the place
That holds my drinking flask.

Whate'er my lot when you are far from here,
I'll ever hold your worth, your friendship dear,
And from Joy's richest cask,
I'll pour life's gayest pleasures unto you,
And drink to bless the hand that brought to view
My silver drinking flask.

Grace.

I know thee not as I would know thee Grace,
And yet my knowing heart is rich with thee:
It holds thy truth, thy worth, thy beauty, free
And fair as guiding stars eyes mortal trace.

It turns to thee and yearns upon thy face
So radiant pure, with eyes of ecstacy
Entreats thy soulful gaze to shine on me
And teach my love to find in thine a place.

Oh, lady fair, thy name I fain would write
With stars on firmaments, for worlds to see
And know that all my thoughts are e'er of thee.
That I my solace seek in such sweet light.

My heart may not be free, unless thy face
Shall light its path to thee, to share thy grace.

Adelaide.

UPON HER EIGHTH BIRTHDAY.

Come, little sunshine, let me sing to thee
That gladdened day when first thou shone on earth,
Thy birthday, child, that sent thee fair, to be
Sweet messenger of sun, and love and mirth,
Sunbeam Adelaide!

We mortal kind to God our blessings give;
He makes this earth a heavenly Paradise,
Where unseen angels sing and flowers thrive,
By sunshine graced, illumed by children's eyes,
Oh, fair Adelaide!

How hopeless, faithless, frail would man appear
Heard he no angels in temptation's hours;
How desolate were this terrestrial sphere,
Unblest by sunshine, children, or by flowers,
Like thee, Adelaide!

To-day I greet thee as an earthly grace,
As child, as angel, sunshine and as flower;
I stand before the glory of thy face
And know in innocence heaven's holy power,
Saint-born Adelaide!

Oh, dainty bud of May, 'neath love's warm beam,
So bright with nature's modesty, so fair
In youthful innocence, thou art a dream
Of truth, of purity, a promise rare,
May-flower Adelaide !

Oh happy child, thou little siren dear,
To lure both old and young with joyful song,
As though its tender melodies you hear
In echoes of some far-off spirit throng,
Song-child Adelaide !

Oh little angel, happy as the spring,
As tender as the sunbeam, bright and gay,
Long may thou live thy mother's name to sing,
To cheer her life and ours with songs of May,
Angel Adelaide !

May all thy days be melody and mirth,
Or else, as night's dew comforteth the flowers,
May thy life's sunlight have more prized worth
For beaming through the tears of summer showers,
Joyous Adelaide !

Roberta and Adele.

✣

May 29, 1888.

✣

The years are naught but ceaseless streams that flow
Into the ocean of eternity.
Earth's children are but heart-led wanderers
That through life's wonderland from stream to stream
Haste on in paths that ne'er may be retraced.
The rivulets of childhood safely crossed,—
Two maidens, fair with springtime hope and love.
Approach a brook whose gentle song doth swell
In consonance with nature's choristers:
"Oh maidens, list unto my song of hope,
Of joy, of sorrow, innocence and love.
This forest-wild is rich in living streams,
For Hope to fear, and Mem'ry feast upon.
The rivulets that sang to you of glee
And bade good cheer attend midst thorns and flowers,
Ne'er knew such joy, such strength, such faith as I,
Who flow between the future and the past,
'Tween joys of spring and love of summer days
That hasten on by autumn cares pursued,
Oft forced to banishment by winter's tears.

Each stronger stream doth greater dangers bring,
Before their awful power I am as naught.
And e'en if they the better nurse your hopes
And let your fancies thrive in their embrace,
Ne'er will they sing such boundless ecstacy
As I, to flower your path and bless your days.

Like you, I am on changeful journey bound,
And ev'ry leap o'er rocks and pebbles tends
To dangers of which yesterday was dumb.

In happy, merry mood I rush along
And laugh and sing till Silence kills my song.
E'er long at rest on ocean's breast I'll be,
A pearl of water in the jeweled sea.

Oh pause, if pause you can, to learn of spring,
Of poesy, of joy, of youth, of love,
The living glory of their wedded faith ;
For spring is poesy: and poesy
Is joy : and joy is youth : and youth is love ;
But love of earthly boons is mightiest.

'Tis spring and poesy, and joy and youth.
With love in exile spring will never smile,
When love is dead fond poesy is dumb,
Not thrilled by love joy ne'er its blossom finds,
Deprived of love, our youth will never bloom.

Now speed along, oh, maidens fair, with love
To cheer you on, with blessings from the brook."

The Language of the Heart.

ADAPTED FROM JEAN PAUL.

On high Olympus' brow reigns Jupiter:
Within his grasp the world, the fate of man,
His sceptre making human destinies.

On sunlit waves of space there floats to him
In modest stateliness, a spirit fair,
The guardian angel of the sentiment
In humankind, the holier aims of man.

The angel prays: "Oh, Heavenly Father, lend
Thy people poor the boon of richer speech,
A language that will full expression give
Unto their joy, their sorrows and their love."

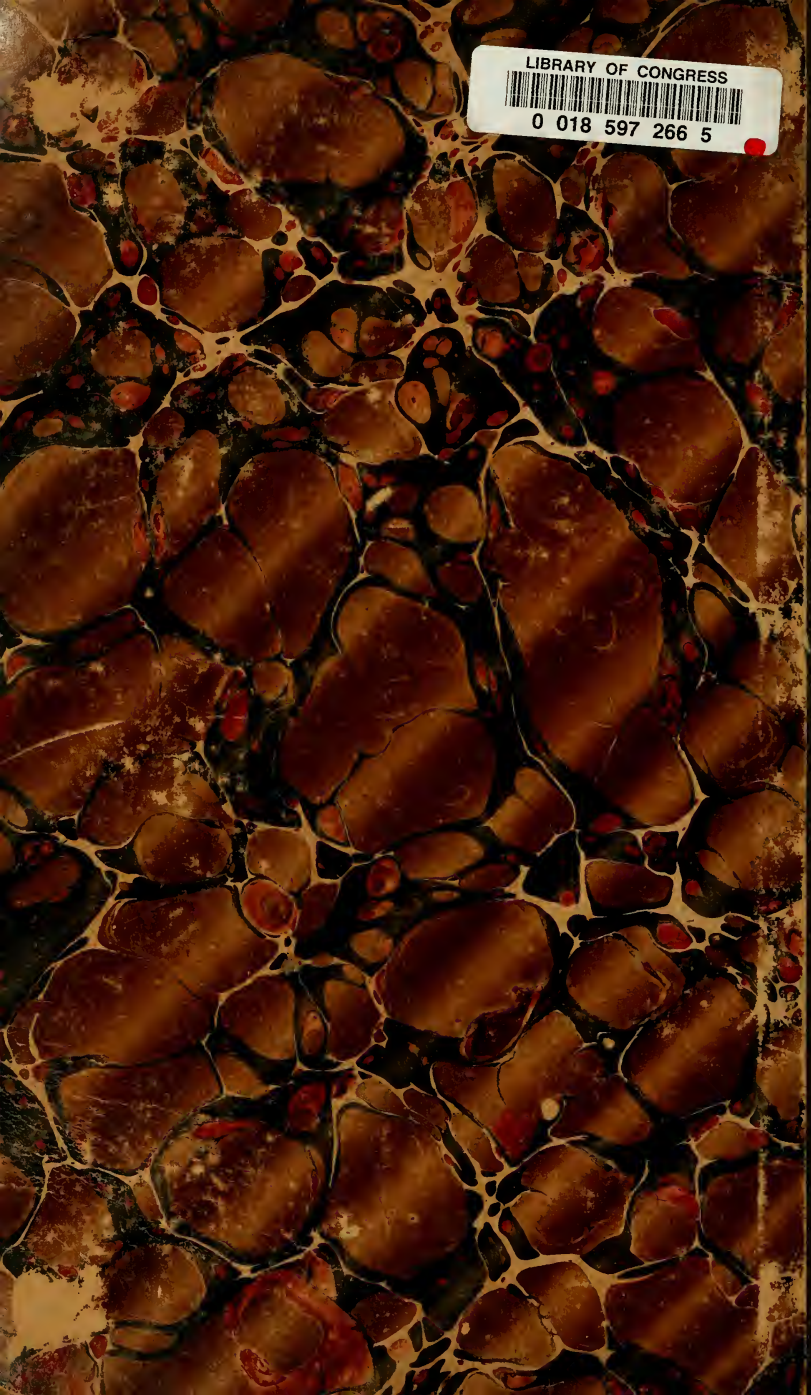
Thus answers Jupiter: "Have not I blest
Them with the tender tear, the tear of joy,
Of sorrow and of love?" The angel pleads:
"Not e'en the tear can give the heart a voice.

Oh, Father Heavenly, give thy earthly sons
A speech to sigh of longing infinite,
Of mem'ries of the little morning star
That shed its guiding light o'er childhood's paths,
A language giving voice unto the glow

Of youth's aurora, golden, heaven-sent,
A language speaking for white winter's sage
As bright and high above the vanished sun
Appear the golden evening clouds, that tell
Of life immortal. Give the human heart
A language new, oh, Father Heavenly."
In realms of spheres a joyous song is heard,
Ecstatic, soul-inspiring and serene.
All nature sighs in blissful thankfulness;
Then Jove with smiling front commands his child,
"Descend to earth, thou holy one, teach man
Thy song," and wafts the Muse of Song to earth.
She blessed mankind and taught the glorious tones
With which the human heart may voice the gods.

Florine.

As knights in olden time went forth to fight
For crowns of war, and won the world's applause,
Whose echoes told of triumph in a cause
That gave to honor strength, and blessed the right,
So I will battle but in moral might.
My sword a song of thee that nations pause
To hear; my shield my faith in thee, whose laws
Shall lead the world from darkness into light.
My love for thee shall be my helmet strong.
Then will I sing the glory of thy name,
Thy grace, thy beauty and nobility.
Then will the world find peace in love and song
By thee inspired. The heavens will joy proclaim,
And laurels won shall bring thee ecstacy.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